

associated with the sample identification information. After the desired number of aliquots are drawn and provided to respective ones of the reaction vessels, the sample tube is returned to the tray and a next sample tube can be accessed.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the text of claims 1, 20, 22, 25, and 27-32 with the following text:

1. (Amended) A clinical chemistry system comprising:  
a storing station that receives and stores a plurality of primary sample tubes;  
a sampling station including a sample probe that draws a volume of sample from a primary sample tube and transfers the volume to a secondary tube;  
a carriage mechanism that grips one of the plurality of primary sample tubes and transports the primary sample tube to the sampling station and returns the primary sample tube to the storing station;  
a first and a second secondary tube transfer station, respectively, for coupling to first and second analyzers, the first and second sample tube transfer stations adapted to move the secondary sample tube from a continuous transport mechanism to be received by a corresponding one of the first and second analyzers;  
and  
the continuous transport mechanism for moving filled secondary tubes to a selected one of the first and second secondary tube transfer stations.

20. (Amended) A clinical chemistry system comprising:  
a sample identification mechanism for determining sample identification information from a primary sample tube;  
a transferring mechanism for transferring a volume of the sample from the primary sample tube into a secondary sample tube;  
a carriage mechanism that grips the primary sample tube and transports it to the sample identification station;  
a continuous transport mechanism for moving secondary sample tubes within the system;

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first and second sample tube transfer stations, respectively, for coupling to first and second analyzers, the first and second sample tube transfer stations adapted to move the secondary sample tube from the continuous transport mechanism to an interface of a first or second analyzer; and

a host computer, the host computer receiving sample identification information and issuing a sample testing message that includes one of the first and second analyzers as a destination.

22. (Amended) The system of claim 20, further comprising:

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a controller that controls the determining of sample identification information and that controls the first sample tube transfer station,

wherein the controller transfers sample identification information to the first clinical chemistry analyzer in conjunction with a transfer of a secondary tube.

27. (Amended) The system of claim 20, wherein a plurality of sample tube carriages are mounted to the belt, each sample tube carriage adapted for carrying the secondary sample tube.

28. (Amended) The system of claim 27, wherein the sample tube carriages provide lateral access to the secondary sample tube within the sample tube carriage from at least two sides of the secondary sample tube.

29. (Amended) The system of claim 27, wherein the sample tube carriages provide lateral access to the secondary sample tube within the sample tube carriage from at least two opposite faces of the secondary sample tube carriage.

30. (Amended) The system of claim 27, wherein the sample tube carriages hold the secondary sample tube in place with resilient clips.

31. (Amended) The system of claim 27, wherein the sample tube carriages hold the secondary sample tube in place using clips that engage an upper and lower portion of a sample tube.

32. (Amended) The system of claim 31, wherein the sample tube carriages provide lateral access to the secondary sample tube within the sample tube carriage from at least two opposite faces of the sample tube carriage.